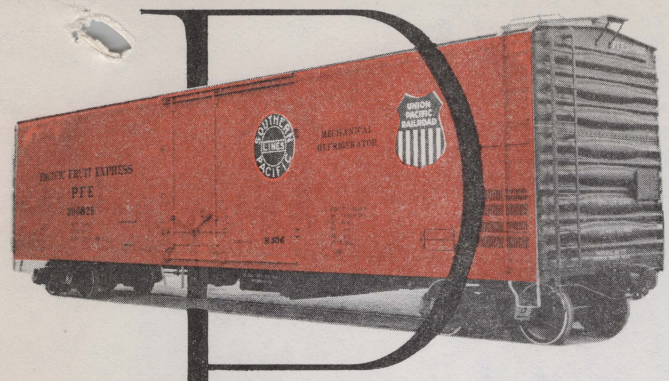


F. Dosch
PACIFIC FRUIT EXPRESS CO.
SACRAMENTO CALIF.
1959 APR 2 AM 8 22

NEWS LETTER

PACIFIC FRUIT EXPRESS COMPANY

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

MARCH 1959

P.F.E. LOADINGS

	1959			1958		
	PFE Cars	Foreigns	Total	PFE Cars	Foreigns	Total
February	*25,364*	*2,160*	*27,524*	*28,635*	*3,630*	*32,265*
Jan.-Feb.	*52,274*	*3,845*	*56,119*	*59,329*	*5,762*	*65,091*

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CAR SITUATION

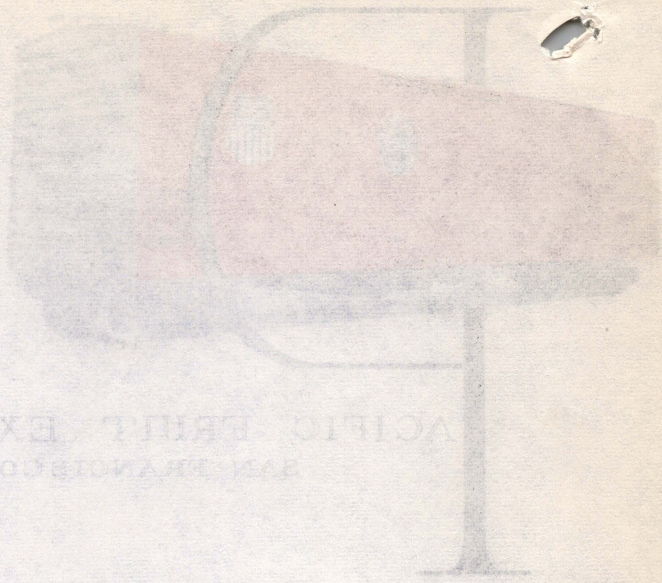
The car situation has continued on a close basis since late February and deteriorated further during the first week in March when shortages were experienced in various sections of Southern California and Arizona with severe shortages on FCdelP. High winds and blizzard conditions from Kansas City through the Panhandle Area coupled with a bad derailment on the Rock Island at Herington, Kansas, interrupted flow of empty reefers into Tucumcari and El Paso. During period March 2nd through 10th it was necessary to obtain 230 ART reefers from Missouri Pacific at San Antonio and Houston for hurried movement to El Paso and while shortage condition in Imperial Valley and Arizona was overcome, we were unable to fill FCdelP request for cars on 100% basis until weekend of March 22nd. The situation in Northern California and Idaho also continued on a day to day basis through the entire period. Commencing the week of March 23rd there were indications of a gradual improvement and with prospects for a good returning tide and seasonal drop in loadings, car supply should be adequate during the remainder of March and throughout month of April. As of March 1st, we had 32,027 PFE cars in service. Included in this amount, however, were 3,517 cars in the category of heavy bad orders, dismantle candidates, and cars in assigned service, giving us a working supply of serviceable cars of but 28,510. This compares with 31,462 serviceable cars in active supply on March 1, 1958. With this noticeable drop of cars in active service, it can be seen readily the car situation on contract lines will seldom be more than barely adequate to protect the perishable business offered.

2932 Dupont 1958

CROP CONDITIONS

ALONG UNION PACIFIC -

In the Utah-Idaho District the potato movement from Idaho has continued in fair volume through the month although markets have been weak. There is every indication the movement will continue in fair volume as potatoes in storage are sprouting and growers must now move their crop regardless



of price. The onion movement is closing out strongly by reason of a very good market which is said to have been caused by adverse weather conditions and disease in the Texas fields. As of March 20th, there were about 150 carloads of onions yet to move. Weather conditions in Idaho have been satisfactory with some rain and a considerable fall of heavy snow which promises to alleviate water shortage conditions along the lower Snake River and in southwestern Idaho.

Northwest District: Tree fruit loading continued through the month of March on a normal basis although well below the movement of last year due to smaller apple and pear crops. The bulk of storages will be cleaned up during the month leaving only a few stragglers to move in April. Entomologists at the Yakima Laboratory are forecasting that apricots should be in full bloom by April 2nd, peaches by April 10th, pears April 17th, and apples April 23rd, which will be nearly three weeks later than last year. In the Seattle area, canned goods loading has continued through the month in a normal seasonal volume; however, somewhat lighter than last year due to greater utilization of DF cars. Frozen foods in storage are reported to be much lighter than last year, and loading consequently is running lighter than during March 1958. Other miscellaneous commodities will continue to move in light seasonal volume. However, beer loading is expected to increase somewhat with the advent of warmer weather.

Eastern District: There has been little change in loadings originated in the Eastern District which consists principally of packing house products from Missouri River centers and canned goods from various sections. In western Nebraska potatoes have tapered off and only an occasional car is being shipped by rail. In the Kansas City section it is reported the Inland Cold Storage Company is increasing its frozen food storage which, when completed in the near future, will increase their capacity to six million cubic feet. Presently, they are unable to take any more frozen food into their storage plant and in fact ten carloads of frozen food which was intended for Inland had to be moved to the U.S. Cold Storage at Kansas City because of lack of space at Inland. Some interest is being evinced by receivers in Kansas City in the possibility of shipping fresh potatoes along with dehydrated potatoes in the same cars. It develops this can be done from Idaho and that the smallest minima for each commodity can be used, for instance, it is possible to ship a car containing 360 100-lb. sacks of fresh potatoes and 100 42-lb. cases of whipped potatoes in the same car using the 40,000 lb. minimum rate for each separate commodity. The belief in Kansas City is this might open up a new avenue for handling Idaho potatoes especially to smaller receivers who can use both types.

ALONG SOUTHERN PACIFIC -

In Oregon the Rogue River pear movement from storages has continued in normal seasonal volume averaging four to seven cars daily. The movement should continue at this rate until storages are depleted. As of March 1st, there were 487 carloads remaining in storage compared with 817 on March 1st last year. In the Klamath Basin the bulk of commercial crop has been moved and potato shipments will continue in gradual declining volume for the next several weeks. In addition to potatoes, there is a light movement of frozen food from storages in the Klamath area that should average five to seven cars weekly through the next four weeks. In the Willamette Valley loading will continue at present rate of about eight to ten cars daily with shipments consisting principally of canned goods, frozen food, some potatoes from eastern Oregon and miscellaneous items.

Northern California: Asparagus shipping from the Sacramento-Stockton area has been disappointing to date. The movement which had been expected to start in late February did not get under-way until the first week in March and then only in very light volume, the "grass" having been retarded to some extent by low temperatures during late evening and early morning hours. Shipments increased gradually up to the middle of March; however, at no time have they exceeded twenty cars daily. In the lower Delta section of the Sacramento River

there are between 400 and 500 acres of peas planted and while the crop appears to be progressing favorably, the harvest is not expected to start until early in May. Apricot orchards around the Winters section are fairly well advanced in the blooming period. The bloom appears heavy and more or less even throughout the district in so far as growth is concerned which indicates a good volume crop in the making. Last year there was a very short crop in this section producing only 38 shipments. Trees in the Brentwood area also are showing very heavy bloom and with normal weather a good crop is in prospect. Lettuce acreage throughout the Stockton district is in good condition and progressing favorably. Barring adverse weather, shipments could start around April 15th. In the Fresno district citrus loading continued in steady volume through the middle of the month and the harvest of Navels is now entering final stages. The Valencia crop is nearing maturity and is estimated at 8,300 carloads compared with 5,500 cars harvested in 1958. Shipping of Valencias will be under-way the latter part of March so that citrus loading generally, regardless of the decline of the Navel crop, will continue in fairly steady volume through April. Weather conditions in San Joaquin Valley have been satisfactory with temperatures averaging well above normal, advancing all crops rapidly. Grape vines are leafing out and most of the deciduous fruits have passed their blooming stage. The planting of potatoes is completed in the Huron and Madera areas and planting of cantaloupes is well under-way. Due to normal temperatures, growth is already apparent. The long range forecast calls for some frost over the Easter weekend and everyone is concerned as numerous crops are in early development stage. In the Bakersfield district there were about 75 cars of grapes remaining in cold storages as of March 1st with loading averaging two to three cars daily with indication that bulk of this remaining storage will be shipped by the end of the month or early in April. The early Spring potato fields are progressing satisfactorily; in fact, there has been one carload shipped from the earliest acreage. This, however, was a test shipment for public relations purposes. The remainder of this very early acreage will probably move to local markets by truck. The digging of regular spring crop, however, is not expected to get under-way until around the middle of April. It is reported that about 5,600 acres of new land suitable for citrus, olives, and vegetable crops are being released for sale by the Terra Bella Irrigation District. Most of this land is in the frost-free citrus belt near the foothills in the east side region of Tulare County. In the San Francisco Bay Area and in the San Jose district, canned goods and frozen foods are the principal items now moving. Canned goods are moving in declining volume and total loading is below that of last year due to greater use made of insulated box and DF equipment. Frozen food loading is running about the same as last year and indications are the movement will continue at about present level. In the Salinas district loading is seasonally light and consists mostly of broccoli, artichokes, cauliflower, and mixed vegetables. There will be no noticeable increase in loading from this section until the Spring lettuce deal gets under-way around the middle or latter part of April.

Southwest District: The tomato movement from the West Coast of Mexico increased rapidly during the last few days of February and in early March. Market prices declined under the heavy shipping but responded later in the month due to reported light crops of tomatoes in Florida and in Cuba. The Florida tomato crop received another setback due to heavy rains during week ending March 21st. In the Salt River Valley citrus loading continued in light volume and is expected to continue at about present level due to heavier movement of citrus from other districts in California and also to light crop in the Phoenix area. The Spring lettuce movement got under-way late in February and a light movement continued through the first half of March. Loadings are expected to increase steadily reaching full production around the middle of April. There is also light movement of miscellaneous vegetables consisting chiefly of celery, green onions, and mixed vegetables. In the Yuma Valley the lettuce movement has passed its peak and is now on the down grade. Shipments will continue to de-

cline with harvesting expected to be completed during first half of April. The demand for grapefruit has been slow with nearly all of the movement being by truck. Valencia oranges are ready to move but picking has been delayed until heavy movement of California Navels eases off. The planting of new groves on Yuma mesa continues on a rather large scale with total plantings now approximating 11,500 acres. There are also some scattered plantings on the Wellton-Mohawk project although total thus far is less than 250 acres. Early cantaloupe fields are progressing satisfactorily with planting of late fields under-way. While it is still too early to estimate total acreage, there are indications it may be as much as one-third greater than acreage last year. In the Imperial Valley the lettuce harvest is fast approaching its close and will likely be completed by end of March. Other vegetables, consisting principally of carrots and some cabbage, will continue in fairly good volume through the month and well into April. In territory west of Banning to and including Guadalupe and Santa Maria, loadings will consist chiefly of citrus fruits, vegetables, and bananas. Citrus shipments will originate over a wide territory from the Riverside-Redlands district through Whittier and the south branches to and including the Santa Paula Branch. Total shipments will average in the neighborhood of 40 to 50 cars daily right through to the middle or latter part of April. Most of the vegetable shipping will take place in the Guadalupe-Santa Maria area with some movement from Oxnard and the Pacific Electric's area around Los Angeles.

T&NO: Weather conditions in the Rio Grande Valley and in the Uvalde-Eagle Pass area finally improved and after a few clear warm days vegetable loading got into full swing. The long period of wet weather, however, has resulted in considerable damage to onion crops and has resulted in rather poor quality showing among other vegetable crops. Crops for Spring harvest in the lower Rio Grande Valley, mainly cantaloupes, onions, tomatoes, and watermelons have made but little progress during first half of March. East Texas tomatoes are being set to cold frames with some going directly into the fields. The progress of these Spring crops will depend to a large extent on future weather conditions.

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It has been the practice for a number of years to write congratulatory letters to PFE people when they reach a given number of years of service. While these letters seem to have been well received and appreciated by recipients, they do not afford an opportunity to acquaint fellow employes of such an event in our individual lives. Therefore, it has been decided to discontinue writing separate letters and in lieu thereof we are instituting a section listing those PFE's who reach certain anniversaries of service with our Company, which I trust you will find of interest. This will commence with next issue of the News Letter and cover April anniversaries. It will afford you an opportunity, if you so desire, to offer your own congratulations to people with whom you are personally acquainted as their names appear from time to time in issues of the News Letter.

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Mr. R. G. Hackett, Civil Engineer, PFE Company, retires on March 31st. He graduated from Stanford in 1922 and after many years of engineering experience with railroads, power companies, and the U.S. Government, joined PFE Engineering Department in 1945. During his service with PFE he has prepared plans and directed construction required for our car repair shop rehabilitation projects, such as the Roseville light repair yard in 1952. Mr. Hackett has made many friends in the PFE who respect him as a capable engineer and admire his fine qualities as a gentleman.

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Mr. Raymond H. Ventle, General Foreman at Los Angeles shop, who had been with Pacific Fruit Express Company since March 1922, and General Foreman at Los Angeles since July 1952, suffered a cerebral hemorrhage while at work on Monday morning February 16th, and passed away later th

day. His entire PFE career was in the Car Department.

Ray was a sterling character and a recognized authority on car repair and construction work. With a competent crew of Foremen and craftsmen he was instrumental in completing with remarkable success a number of recent new car orders. His ability to organize construction line work with "short cuts" without sacrificing quality and workmanship was an outstanding characteristic. He will be missed by all who knew him.

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Mr. Harold L. Tate was appointed March 23rd to fill the vacancy created by the passing of Mr. Ventle.

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The following PFE people have recently retired from our service:

Rollie W. Anderson...Clk-Insp.....Ogden

Lloyd W. Hellar.....Carman.....Roseville

Albert Pain.....Ice Puller.....Tucson

Edward E. Phillips...Carman.....Colton

Lacy L. Spinks.....Carman.....Colton

Maurilio Zavala.....Laborer.....Roseville

To each of them, we extend our best wishes for a long and happy retirement.

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"The world is full of willing people; some willing to work, the rest willing to let them."

--Frost

CHAS. AHERN
Vice President & General Manager